

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00

DLOS-04 SAL-01 OFA-01 OES-03 /094 W  
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R 291101Z FEB 76  
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4798

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E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PORG, PFOR, KU, UN  
SUBJ: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: KUWAIT

REF: (A) STATE 037591, (B) KUWAIT 0546 FEB 75, (C) KUWAIT 0561  
FEB 75

SUMMARY: THE EMBASSY RESPONDS TO THE QUESTIONS CONTAINED IN  
REFTEL (A) CONCERNING KUWAIT'S POLICIES AND HANDLING OF MULTILATERAL  
ISSUES. PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN ALTERING PAST KUWAITI VOTING PATTERNS  
AT THE UN AND IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL BORA ARE DESCRIBED AND GENERAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS ARE MADE ON METHODS OF IMPROVING BILATERAL CON-  
SULTATION ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. END SUMMARY

1. KUWAIT IS A MEMBER OF THE ARAB LEAGUE, FAO, GATT, IAEA,  
IBRD, ICAO, IDA, IFC, ILO, IMCO, IMF, IPU, ITU, OAPEC, OPEC,  
UN, UNESCO, UPU, WHO AND WMO. IN GENERAL, IT APPROACHES  
ITS VOTING AND PERFORMANCE IN THESE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN  
THE WAY IT LOOKS AT LIFE IN GENERAL -- CHANGES TO THE STATUS QUO  
POSITION ON EVEN MINOR MATTERS MUST BE CERTIFIABLY MORE BENEFICIAL  
TO KUWAIT THAN GOING ALONG WITH PROVEN, EXISTING POLICY. THE  
GOK BELIEVES IT HAS LITTLE FLEXIBILITY GIVEN ITS SIZE AND VULNER-  
ABILITY AND WOULD RATHER BE MEASURED BY WHAT IT DOES BILATERALLY IN  
ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER COUNTRIES THAN BY WHAT IT SAYS IN MULTI-

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LATERAL FORA. EVER SINCE ACHIEVING ITS INDEPENDENCE 15 YEARS AGO,  
THE FOREIGN POLICY OF KUWAIT HAS BEEN TO WALK A TIGHTROPE BETWEEN

THE IMAGE IT WANTS THE WORLD TO HAVE ("PROGRESSIVE") AND A COLD-GLOODED PURSUIT OF ITS FUNDAMENTAL INTERESTS (PRESERVATION AND INCREASE OF NATIONAL WEALTH). THIS APPROACH TO THE REST OF THE WORLD HAS NOT SERVED KUWAIT TOO BADLY SO FAR, ALTHOUGH ITS LILLIPUTIAN OUTCRIES AGAINST THE WEST, ESPECIALLY THE US, OFTEN ANNOYS US AND ITS PERMISSIVENESS TOWARDS LEFTISTS IN GENERAL AGNERS KUWAIT'S MORE CONSERVATIVE NEIGHBORS.

2. KUWAIT'S PRIMARY MULTILATERAL INTEREST AND OBJECTIVE IN 1976 IS TO SEE RESOLUTION OF THE ARAB/ISRAELI DISPUTE ON TERMS ACCEPTABLE TO ONE-FOURTH OF ITS POPULATION (PALESTINIANS). IT BELIEVES THIS UNLIKELY, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF "UNREASONABLE" USG SUPPORT OF ISRAEL. UNTIL THE USG APPEARS WILLING TO RECOGNIZE THE REALITY OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, AS SEEN THROUGH KUWAITI EYES, THE GOK WILL FEEL UNDER NO COMPULSION TO SIDE WITH THE USG ON ISSUES OF LESSER CONSEQUENCE TO KUWAIT.

3. WHILE KUWAITI LEADERSHIP REMAINS PREOCCUPIED WITH THE ARAB/ISRAELI PROBLEM, THE GOK IS SUFFICIENTLY PRAGMATIC TO RECOGNIZE KUWAIT'S BASIC INTERESTS ARE TIED TO THE FORTUNES OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD. IT DESIRES AN EARLY RETURN TO A HEALTHY WORLD ECONOMY WITH MAXIMUM TRADE AND MINIMUM RESTRICTIONS ON INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN BOTH DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING NATIONS. IT HAS NOT AGGRESSIVELY SOUGHT A MAJOR ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL FORA CONSIDERING THESE MATTERS (E.G. CIEC), PREFERRING TO LET OTHERS TAKE THE LEAD. HOWEVER, IT HAS AND WILL CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN DELIBERATIONS OF THE IMF AND IBRD BECAUSE THOSE ORGANIZATIONS' ACTIVITIES HAVE A DIRECT BEARING ON KUWAITI FINANCIAL AND MONETARY INTERESTS. IT ALSO WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN THE FINANCIAL AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF 77, AS INSTIGATOR OF AND HOST TO THAT GROUP'S RECENTLY ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONAL LENDING INSTITUTION. IT WILL RELUCTANTLY CONTINUE TO EXTEND IMPORTANT AID TO THE CONFRONTATION STATES AND, HOPEFULLY, EXTEND SIMILAR ASSISTANCE TO THE LEBANON, PREFERABLY IN A BILATERAL CONTEXT.

4. OVER THE NEXT YEAR, KUWAIT WILL PLAY A RELATIVELY LARGE ROLE IN THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE ILO, AS THE ONLY ARAB COUNTRY REPRESENTED ON THE GOVERNING BOARD. IT PROBABLY WILL PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE, MOSTLY IN LINE WITH US INTERESTS, IN LAW OF THE SEA NEGOTIATIONS,

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BUT BE LESS HELPFUL IN IMCO AND OTHER MARITIME DELIBERATIONS. ON THE DEPARTURE OF KUWAIT'S CURRENT PERM REP (BISHARA) FROM THE UN AT THE END OF THE CURRENT SESSION (HE WILL BECOME HEAD OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS) THE GOK IS LIKELY TO BECOME LESS OUTSPOKEN IN THIRD WORLD CAUCUSES IN THAT BODY. THE GOK HAS MADE PRO FORMA DEMARCHE ON BEHALF OF VARIOUS THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS SEEKING POSITIONS IN UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL BODIES, BUT DOES NOT CURRENTLY HAVE KUWAITI CITIZENS ACTIVELY SEEKING ASUCH POSITIONS.

5. KUWAIT'S FOREIGN POLICY AND OBJECTIVES ARE DESCRIBED IN  
CONSIDERABLE DETAIL IN REFTELS (B) AND (C). AS INDICATED THEREIN,  
THE GOK WOULD LIKE TO PLAY A LEADERSHIP ROLE AMONG THE SMALLER  
GULF STATES, BUT GENERALLY HAS BEEN REBUFFED IN ITS EFFORTS. ITS "PRO

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GRESSIVE" FOREIGN POLICY FREQUENTLY CONFLICTS WITH US NATIONAL  
INTERESTS, PARTICULARLY WHEN KUWAIT ENGAGES IN BLOC-VOTING WHICH IT  
CONSIDERS A LEGITIMATE AND, PERHAPS, THE ONLY MEANS OF MAKING ITS  
WEIGHT FELT IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. THE GOK FEELS ITS INTERESTS ARE  
BEST SERVED BY MAINTAINING OPEN RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES, REGARD-  
LESS OF POLITICAL PERSUASION. LOCAL OFFICIALS TAKE A CERTAIN PERVERSE  
PLEASURE IN ASSUMING POSITIONS PROTESTED BY THE "SUPER POWERS",  
AS LONG AS THEY ARE COVERED BY BEING IN THE COMPANY OF OTHER MAJOR  
ARAB COUNTRIES. THEY PARTICULARLY RESENT ARM TWISTING BY THE USG  
ON UN ISSUES WHICH FREQUENTLY, IN THE EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT, IS  
COUNTER PRODUCTIVE. THEY WATCH CLOSELY EGYPTIAN AND SAUDI VOT-  
ING IN THE UN AND HAVE NOTED OUR APPARENT INABILITY TO SWAY  
PARTICULARLY THE FORMER ON ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THE USG.  
THEY ADMIRE ALGERIA FOR ACHIEVING A LEADERSHIP ROLE, ALTHOUGH  
THEY FREQUENTLY DISAGREE WITH ALGERIAN POLICIES AND DO NOT  
TRUST THAT COUNTRY'S MOTIVES.

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4799

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KUWAIT 0997

6. KUWAITI DELEGATES TO THE UN AND MOST OTHER INTERNATIONAL  
MEETINGS RECEIVE MINIMAL GUIDANCE. ONLY ONE OFFICER IN THE

FOREIGN MINISTRY (FEISAL AL REFAI, A FORMER MEMBER OF KUWAIT'S UN DELEGATION) FOLLOWS UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS ON A FULL-TIME BASIS. NO POSITION PAPERS OR OTHER SUB-STANTIVE DOCUMENTS USUALLY ARE PREPARED. ORAL INSTRUCTIONS, IF ANY, ARE GIVEN TO DELEGATIONS BEFORE MAJOR MEETINGS. FEW REPORTS ARE RECEIVED IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. BOTH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND UNDER SECRETARY OFTEN APPEAR IGNORANT OF PERIPHERAL ISSUES. THEY LISTEN POLITELY TO REPRESENTATION MADE BY THE US AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES, BUT RARELY TAKE DEFINITIVE ACTION TO INSTRUCT THEIR DELEGATIONS. THEY HAVE GREAT FAITH IN AMBASSADOR BISHARA'S ABILITY TO BEST REPRESENT KUWAIT'S INTERESTS AT THE UN. THEY SEEM UNPRETURBED BY REPORTS THAT THE LATTER HAS VOTED CONTRARY TO "UNDERSTANDINGS" REACHED WITH THE US AND OTHERS IN KUWAIT AND EXPLAIN BLOC-VOTING AS A PART OF THE "HORSE-TRADING" ESSENTIAL FOR SMALL COUNTRIES IN THE UN ENVIRONMENT. THE UNDER-SECRETARY FREQUENTLY EQUATES THE UN SCENE WITH WHAT HE TERMS "PORK-BARRELING" IN THE US CONGRESS. HE HAS FLATLY STATED THAT IT IS NEITHER IN THE US NOR KUWAIT'S INTEREST TO PERMIT "UNIMPORTANT UN ISSUES" TO AFFECT IMPORTANT BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

7. KUWAITI DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC MEETINGS ARE  
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BETTER DISCIPLINED AND BETTER INFORMED. (THE FOREIGN MINISTRY FREQUENTLY IS NOT REPRESENTED.) THEY READ MATERIAL SUPPLIED BY THE EMBASSY AND ASK GOOD QUESTIONS. FOLLOW-UP IS GOOD BY MOST STANDARDS. WHEN A COMMITMENT IS MADE, IT USUALLY WILL BE HONORED BY THE KUWAITI SIDE. THE SAME IS TRUE WITH RESPECT TO KUWAITI REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS ON THE LAW OF THE SEA. LABOR MINISTER SHAIKH SALEM (FORMER AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON) WILL HEAD THE KUWAITI DELEGATION TO ILO MEETINGS IN GENEVA. HE HAS ASKED FOR AND THE EMBASSY HAS RECOMMENDED THAT ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION BE PROVIDED BY THE USG (KUWAIT 0401).

8. KUWAITI REPRESENTATION AT ALL INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE CABINET. ALTHOUGH LITTLE SUBSTANTIVE GUIDANCE IS PROVIDED, ALL MAJOR MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS OR COMMITMENTS MUST FIRST RECEIVE CABINET APPROVAL. THIS REQUIREMENT MAKES NECESSARY AT LEAST MINIMAL PREPARATION AND THE DRAFTING OF DOCUMENTATION FOR CABINET STUDY ON ECONOMIC ISSUES. ALL MAJOR POLICY ISSUES ARE REFERRED TO THE CROWN PRINCE/PRIME MINISTER FOR DECISION, THE ONLY WAY A MAJOR POLICY SHIFT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED. IF THE CROWN PRINCE IS NOT INTERESTED, POLICY WILL REMAIN THE SAME. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THE CROWN PRINCE IS PREPARED TO SHIFT AWAY FROM KUWAIT'S PAST "PROGRESSIVE" FOREIGN POLICY STANCE. WHILE HE HAS THE CLOUT TO INSIST ON TIMELY REPORTING AND THE REFERRAL OF MAJOR ISSUES TO KUWAIT FOR RESOLUTION, HE IS NOT NORMALLY INCLINED TO INTERFERE WITH KUWAITI DELEGATIONS ATTENDING INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS.

9. AS INDICATED ABOVE, THE GOK IS RARELY RECEPTIVE TO DIRECT

REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY THE US ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES AND REJECTS THE NOTION THAT THESE ISSUES ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. THE GOK PRACTICALLY NEVER SEEKS USG ASSISTANCE OR ADVICE, BUT MOST OFFICIALS ACCEPT GRATEFULLY THE VOLUMINOUS MATERIAL SUPPLIED INFORMALLY ON AN ALMOST DAILY BASIS THROUGH USIS (ALL MAJOR US POLICY STATEMENTS). WHILE SENIOR OFFICIALS RARELY HAVE THE TIME TO READ THE MATERIAL SUPPLIED, KEY STATEMENTS ARE TRANSMITTED TO THEM UNDER A COVERING NOTE FROM THE CHIEF OF MISSION. (THE LOCAL PRESS HAS, AT TIMES, CRITICIZED THE EMBASSY FOR "FLOODING KUWAIT" WITH SUCH PROPAGANDA -- AN EFFORT WHICH AT LEAST DRAWS PUBLIC ATTENTION TO THEUS POSITION ON PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE ISSUES.)

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10. THE EMBASSY HAS EXPENDED A GREAT DEAL OF EFFORT IN THE PAST IN ATTEMPTING TO MODIFY KUWAITI VOTING ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES MOSTLY WITHOUT SUCCESS. THE IMMINENT RETURN TO KUWAIT OF THE GOK'S PERMREP AT THE UN WILL GIVE US ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY TO WORK ON THE PROBLEM. HOWEVER, WE ARE NOT SANGUINE THAT A BREAK-THROUGH WILL BE ACHIEVED UNTIL THE INSIDIOUS ARAB/ISRAELI PROBLEM MOVES CLOSER TO RESOLUTION. MEANWHILE, THE STRATEGY OUTLINE IN MARSHALL WILEY'S EXCELLENT ASSESSMENT (BAGHDAD 0214) SEEMS EQUALLY WELL SUITED TO OUR EFFORTS IN KUWAIT. WITH LIMITE D LEVERAGE AND LITTLE REAL INFLUENCE THERE APPEARS LITTLE WE CAN DO BUT CONTINUE TO SUPPLY GOK DECISION MAKERS WITH SOUND ARGUMENTATION SLANTED TOWARDS ARAB INTERESTS. THE DEPARTMENT CAN BEST ASSIST BY PROVIDING SHORT, CONCISE STATEMENTS ON KEY ISSUES SUITABLE FOR DIRECT TRANSMITTAL TO KEY GOK OFFICIALS. OCCASIONAL ATTENTION PAID BY SENIOR US OFFICIALS TO GOK POLICY MAKERS COULD GO EVEN FURTHER IN HELPING MODIFY KUWAIT'S PAST POOR RECORD OF SUPPORT OF US POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. WE HAVE BEEN MOST SUCCESSFUL IN INFLUENCING KUWAITIS IN THE MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS AREA (I.E., IFAP

LAW OF THE SEA), WHERE WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP A PATTERN ON RATHER CLOSE CONSULTATION.

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## Message Attributes

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